

# 2021 ECONOMIC REPORT WEST CENTRAL REGION



MISSOURI  
DEPARTMENT OF  
HIGHER EDUCATION &  
WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

The West Central Region is comprised of 13 counties in the west central part of Missouri. This region is home to cities including Warrensburg, Sedalia, Lexington, Clinton, and Nevada.

The West Central Region workforce has more than 119,600 employees, making up 4 percent of Missouri's employment. In 2020, 53 percent of the workforce was female and 47 percent was male. The regional average unemployment rate for 2020 was 5.6 percent.

The workforce is getting older in the West Central Region, a trend happening throughout Missouri and the U.S. In 2020, 26 percent of the workforce was age 55 or older, up from 22 percent a decade earlier.

For the region, 7 percent of the workforce was non-white, compared to 17 percent for the state; 5 percent of the region's workforce was Hispanic or Latino, compared to 4 percent for Missouri.

In the West Central Region 5 percent of the population (ages 18 to 64) speaks a language other than English at home. By comparison, Missouri was at 7 percent and the U.S. was at 23 percent.

The West Central Region has a higher percentage of the population with a disability compared to the state and the nation. For the West Central Region, 16 percent of the population has a disability compared to 12 percent in Missouri and 10 percent in the U.S.

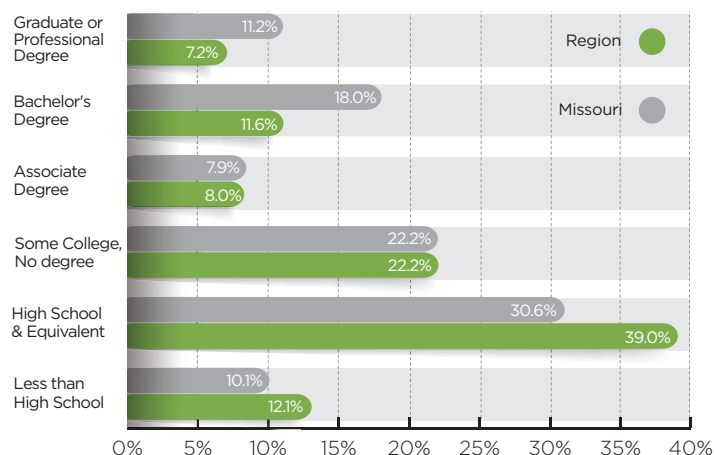
## Workforce Demographics

	WC Region	Missouri	Nationwide
Average Monthly Employment in 2020	119,658	2,867,162	147,795,000
Average Unemployment Rate in 2020	5.6%	6.1%	8.1%
Female	53%	51%	50%
Male	47%	49%	50%
Non-White	7%	17%	24%
Hispanic or Latino	5%	4%	16%
Ages 55 and Older	26%	24%	24%
With Disabilities (Ages 18-64)	16%	12%	10%
Below Poverty Levels (Ages 18-64)	16%	13%	13%
Language other than English (Ages 18-64)	5%	7%	23%
Education of Associate Degree or Higher	27%	37%	41%

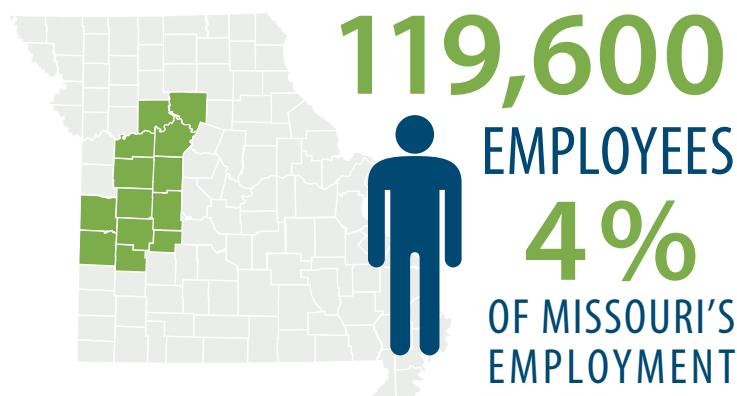
SOURCES: CENSUS ACS 2019-5YR EST.; LEHD 2ND QUARTER; BLS LAUS 2020

Educational attainment rates for the West Central Region are lower than those of the state in regards to bachelor's or advanced degrees. Twenty-seven percent of the region's population, age 25 and older, has an associate, bachelor's, or advanced degree compared to 37 percent for the state.

## Educational Attainment



SOURCE: US CENSUS BUREAU, ACS 2019 5-YEAR ESTIMATES

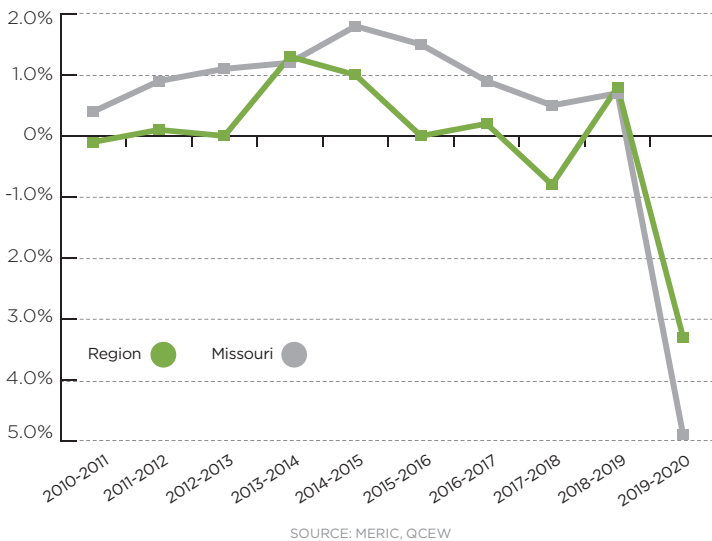


# WEST CENTRAL REGION

## INDUSTRY ANALYSIS

The West Central Region averaged over 81,200 jobs in 2020. The region lost over 2,800 jobs from 2019 to 2020, resulting in a -3.3 percent employment growth. Missouri employment decreased by 4.9 percent in that time. From 2016 to 2020, the West Central Region averaged -0.8 percent annual growth for an overall decrease of 3.2 percent; during that same period Missouri's employment declined by 2.9 percent.

West Central Employment Annual Growth Rate



The *Health Care and Social Assistance* industry continues to be one of the largest employing industries in the region with over 16,000 jobs. *Retail Trade* is the second largest industry in the area, even though it lost over 1,000 jobs from 2016 to 2020.

The industries of *Construction*; *Wholesale Trade*; and *Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services* had the largest employment gains from 2016 to 2020.

West Central Region Top Employing Industries

Industry	Employment 2016	Employment 2020	Net Change	2016-2020 Empl. CAGR	2019 Annual Wages
Health Care & Social Assistance	15,755	16,001	246	0.4%	\$36,924
Retail Trade	10,468	9,414	-1,054	-2.6%	\$28,812
Accommodation & Food Services	6,967	6,291	-676	-2.5%	\$15,588
Construction	3,481	3,845	364	2.5%	\$44,760
Public Administration	3,810	3,790	-20	-0.1%	\$26,592
Wholesale Trade	2,852	3,088	236	2.0%	\$56,316
Finance & Insurance	2,512	2,475	-37	-0.4%	\$49,452
Other Services (except Public Admin.)	2,057	2,005	-52	-0.6%	\$29,460
Transportation & Warehousing	2,138	1,959	-179	-2.2%	\$39,756
Professional, Scientific, & Tech. Servs.	1,705	1,899	194	2.7%	\$54,456

SOURCE: LEHD-QWI, 2016-2020 2ND QUARTER

## LOCATION QUOTIENT

To understand the major industries within a region, an analysis of industry concentration or clustering can be useful. The Location Quotient (LQ) describes the concentration of an industry in a geographic region, in relation to the nation, with 1.0 being the national average. Industries higher than 1.0 indicate a concentration.

The West Central Region has higher concentrations in *Gas Stations*, *National Security and International Affairs*, *Support Activities for Agriculture and Forestry*, *Animal Production*, and *Food Manufacturing*.

HIGHEST 2020  
LQ 4.9  
GASOLINE STATIONS

2020 West Central Region Location Quotients

Industry	Employment	Location Quotient
Gasoline Stations	1,757	4.9
National Security & International Affairs	974	4.1
Support Activities for Agriculture & Forestry	521	3.6
Animal Production & Aquaculture	333	3.2
Food Manufacturing	1,909	3.1
Primary Metal Manufacturing	410	3.0
Nursing & Residential Care Facilities	3,634	2.8
Machinery Manufacturing	1,124	2.8
Fabricated Metal Product Manufacturing	1,447	2.7
Postal Service	562	2.4
Motor Vehicle & Parts Dealers	1,615	2.2
Crop Production	437	2.1
Merchant Wholesalers, Nondurable Goods	1,650	2.1
Bldg. Material & Garden Equip. Dealers	1,053	2.0
General Merchandise Stores	2,193	1.9

SOURCE: BUREAU OF LABOR STATISTICS, QCEW

# WEST CENTRAL REGION

Projected growth by industry helps to identify future employment needs for an area. Projections indicate that the largest growth industries in the West Central Region will be *Administrative and Support Services, Social Assistance, Construction of Buildings, Merchant Wholesalers (Nondurable Goods), and Educational Services.*

West Central Region Largest Growth Industries 2018-2028

Industry	Employment		Change	
	2018 Estimated	2028 Projected	2018-2028 Numeric	Percent
Administrative & Support Services	1,460	1,813	353	24.2%
Social Assistance	3,337	3,648	311	9.3%
Construction of Buildings	639	947	308	48.2%
Merchant Wholesalers, Nondurable Goods	1,460	1,730	270	18.5%
Educational Services	9,719	9,951	232	2.4%
Crop Production	1,194	1,390	196	16.4%
Food Services & Drinking Places	6,998	7,176	178	2.5%
Support Activities for Agriculture & Forestry	640	801	161	25.2%
Transit & Ground Passenger Transportation	522	681	159	30.5%
Local Government, Excl. Education & Hospitals	5,220	5,365	145	2.8%

SOURCES: MERIC INDUSTRY PROJECTIONS

PROJECTED GROWTH BY INDUSTRY HELPS TO IDENTIFY FUTURE EMPLOYMENT NEEDS FOR AN AREA.

## OCCUPATIONAL PROJECTIONS

MERIC produces occupational projections that estimate labor demand over a 10-year period. MERIC categorizes these occupations using its Now-Next-Later method to help job seekers understand the training, education, and experience requirements for various occupations.

**Now** jobs typically require short-term on-the-job training, little to no experience, and/or a high school diploma. Now occupations include *Combined Food Preparation and Serving Workers, Cashiers, and Personal Care Aides* which lead the way in total openings. *Bus Drivers, School or Special Client, Helpers--Production Workers, and Personal Care Aides* are projected to be the fastest growing Now occupations over the next decade.

**Next** jobs typically require a non-degree certificate, associate degree, apprenticeship, some experience, or moderate- to long-term training. *Secretaries and Administrative Assistants, Nursing Assistants, and Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers* will have the most openings for the Next category of occupations. *Agricultural Equipment Operators, Carpenters, and Respiratory Therapists* are the fastest growing Next occupations.

**Later** jobs typically require a bachelor's degree or higher. For Later occupations *Secondary School Teachers, General and Operations Managers, and Substitute Teachers* will have the most openings. *Nurse Practitioners, Nursing Instructors and Teachers, Postsecondary, and Market Research Analysts and Marketing Specialists* are the fastest growing Later occupations.

West Central Region Fastest Growing Occupations



NOTE: OCCUPATIONS WITH NET INCREASE OF LESS THAN 50 ARE OMITTED

SOURCE: MERIC OCCUPATIONAL PROJECTIONS, 2018-2028

★ DENOTES OCCUPATIONS TOP TEN ONLINE JOB ADS FOR 2020-2021 IN THE REGION AND WITHIN THE NOW-NEXT-LATER CLASSIFICATIONS

# WEST CENTRAL REGION

## West Central Region Long-Term Occupational Projections by Top Openings

Occupation	2018 Estimated Employment	2028 Projected Employment	Growth Openings	Exits	Transfers	Total Openings	Median Wages
<b>NOW</b>							
Combined Food Preparation and Serving Workers	3,173	3,367	194	261	322	602	\$18,824 ★
Cashiers	2,741	2,687	-54	242	270	507	\$19,421 ★
Personal Care Aides	2,704	3,238	534	220	195	468	\$21,670 ★
Retail Salespersons	2,585	2,555	-30	148	228	373	\$22,746 ★
Waiters and Waitresses	1,526	1,485	-41	104	184	284	\$18,765
<b>NEXT</b>							
Secretaries and Administrative Assistants	2,370	2,120	-250	115	136	226	\$29,917
Nursing Assistants	1,865	1,882	17	101	109	212	\$21,670 ★
Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers	1,487	1,606	119	64	112	188	\$36,555 ★
Cooks, Restaurant	1,070	1,176	106	60	99	170	\$21,374
Welders, Cutters, Solderers, and Brazers	1,222	1,273	51	32	105	142	\$35,111
<b>LATER</b>							
Secondary School Teachers	2,001	2,050	49	56	86	147	\$44,190
General and Operations Managers	1,223	1,292	69	26	83	116	\$56,812 ★
Substitute Teachers	989	1,013	24	58	56	116	\$27,276
Registered Nurses	1,495	1,561	66	42	39	88	\$58,855 ★
Elementary School Teachers	1,045	1,071	26	33	45	81	\$39,171

SOURCE: MERIC OCCUPATIONAL PROJECTIONS 2018-2028

★ DENOTES OCCUPATIONS IN THE TOP TEN FOR 2020-2021 ON-LINE JOB ADS IN THE REGION & WITHIN THE NOW-NEXT-LATER CLASSIFICATION

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For more information, visit  
[meric.mo.gov](http://meric.mo.gov) or [dhewd.mo.gov](http://dhewd.mo.gov)



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